

HONORING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MABEL WADSWORTH CENTER

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Mabel Wadsworth Center as it celebrates its 30th anniversary of providing outstanding health care and educational services to the women of Maine.

The Mabel Wadsworth Center is the only private, not-for-profit, feminist health center in the state of Maine. The center is named for Mabel Wadsworth, a pioneer in Maine for women's health, education, and reproductive justice. Since 1984, the organization has been dedicated to providing quality health care to women while empowering patients to take control of their health and their lives.

The Mabel Wadsworth Center works tirelessly to provide clinical and educational services to women regardless of their age, ability, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, or economic status. Across Maine and the region, the Center has also become an advocacy leader on issues important to women and women's health.

This year, the Mabel Wadsworth Center celebrates 30 years of promoting and protecting access to quality women's healthcare in Maine. I am delighted to recognize the accomplishments of the Center and their dedicated team and look forward to their continued success in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Mabel Wadsworth Center on three decades of exceptional care and advocacy.

POLITICAL PRISONERS ON HUNGER STRIKE IN EGYPT

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2014

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, approximately 80 political prisoners in Egypt are on a hunger strike to protest their detention and the Egyptian government's continuing crackdown on dissent.

Over the past several years, the Government of Egypt has undertaken harsh measures to silence its critics. Even as Egypt has committed to undertake a democratic transition, its efforts to quell dissent have increased and worsened within the past year.

Last November, former Egyptian President Adly Mansour approved a severe anti-protest law that effectively bans any protests not sanctioned by the government. Under that law, dozens of peaceful protesters have been arrested for demonstrating against it.

According to international human rights organizations, those arrested for violating the protest law over the past several months join the more than 41,000 people who have been subjected to politically-motivated arrests since last July. Among those now in detention are opposition leaders, human rights activists, peaceful protesters, and journalists.

Many of these detainees have given up any hope for a fair trial or for securing their freedom, and more than eighty prisoners have gone on hunger strike in protest of their detentions and the Government's on-going crackdown on dissent.

Today, I call upon the Government of Egypt to immediately release all those detained for political reasons or for exercising their rights to free speech, expression and assembly. I also call upon the Egyptian government to repeal or amend those laws currently being used to repress peaceful dissent and ensure compliance with Egypt's obligations under international human rights law.

I welcome the release on bail yesterday of at least three of the prisoners who were taking part in the hunger strike. They will continue to pursue an appeal of their convictions for violating the anti-protest law. Despite their release, however, dozens of other activists remain imprisoned and as of today, over 80 prisoners are estimated to be on hunger strike.

In September, Egyptian authorities announced that an initiative for reconciliation would be put on the table following the passage of a transitional justice law once the new parliament is established at the end of the year. Reconciliation requires respect for individuals, political parties and organizations that hold differing points of view. And such respect requires that the government and the people of the nation allow for the free expression of dissenting views. As one of our key security partners in the region, the United States should insist that Egypt respect peaceful dissent and pledge to support and help Egypt achieve a truly democratic transition.